*177 657 facilities for local community development have been introduced in the period of a few months. The structure through which they are available is diagrammed in Figure 3. Baird's autonomous position as a gold miner has changed. As Project Officer, he is now responsible for locally implementing government programs and supervising facilities that cut across the responsibilities of several Ministries. These include the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agricultural and Natural Resources, and Ministry of Local Government. In addition to his position in the Interior Development Department, Baird is also an agent for the Post Office Department, Civil Aviation, and Guyana Airways Corporation. By July 1970, the *177 361 Baramita Air Strip community was established. Two new buildings constructed along the air strip to house government personnel add to the appearance of a settlement.

*177 622 [66] In addition to these services for the population, the Ministry of Local Government has provided for the development of local Amerindian leadership. As with all Amerindian populations in the interior, local elections are held. The first occurred in the Upper Barama River area at In Time in October 1967. A second election was held at the air strip in October 1971. A Captain and three Councillors are chosen. The Captaincy is a salaried position; councillorship is not. Thus, one more source of external resources is available to this population.

*177 175 423 657 The question of local land tenure also has received government attention. However, the Amerindian request for land titles occurred without the participation of the Upper Barama River Caribs who have

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 32]

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

175 a population of approximately 200 people. This provided a density of
162 approximately one person per five square miles along the Upper Barama
[161] River corridor.

*177 Over time, with the introduction of external resources, this
162 relationship has been changed. The niche of the Upper Barama Caribs
was first extended by exchange and employment opportunities. Peberty's
observations (1948) on this population were made during the first ex-
[161] tensive involvement in employment. However, the data presented take
the form of estimates rather than actual figures.

114 Peberty visited the Upper Barama River area sometime between
161 December 1945 and February 1946 for the purpose of making suggestions
181 for Amerindian development. He reports that "The Upper Barama River
Caribs are the most impoverished and traumatic aboriginal group that
I have encountered throughout the length and breadth of British
Guiana" (1948:20). In part, he attributes this condition to the loss
of Carib crafts as a consequence of opportunities with the miners.
[165] Peberty reports further an unspecified but "relatively high" infant
mortality (1948:15). However, he provides no explanation. Also, he
suggests that a reputed decline in the population is related to the
"morbid conditions of these contemporary Carib groups" (1948:20). He
estimates about 474 Caribs for the Upper Barama River area and the
114 Barima tributaries (1948:15). Little can be said regarding population
161 increase or decrease at this time from his observations. However,
there is one indication that the population size reported by Gillin
was little changed. In 1953, eighty-eight adults were registered to
[166] vote in the Upper Barama River area.

*177 175 438 443 The trade store was the main vehicle for the involvement of the remainder of the population in regional exchange. With the establishment of Baird's enterprise, there was a constant call for local foods which the trade store stocked. Caribs not employed at the mine were then able to sell these foods on a more or less planned basis. The residents of Aranka, Baramita, and later the Air Strip, did this regularly. Caribs in the more remote settlements made more infrequent trips. However, the quantities required were limited. No special fields were cut nor special crops planted. Part of the regular subsistence production was used for these exchange purposes. Also, there operated informal consignment agreements. When a supply of meat, cassava, plantains, yams, or whatever ran low, individual men were invited to bring these to the store. Often no money changed [439] hands. Rather, small accounts were kept. In addition to exchanges centralized by the trade store, some exchanges occurred directly 175 between Caribs. The prices used were those at the trade store. Also, *177 for a short time, the missionaries contributed to the market opportunities 799 439 in the area by occasionally hiring a few laborers, by buying some local handicraft items, and by selling food and clothing.

*177 175 657 622 Before the mine closed in 1969, one other development occurred which further involved this population in regional exchange networks. A local administrative structure, devised and implemented by the Ministry of Local Government, has been imposed on Amerindian populations to promote national political integration.[3] Amerindian [666] offices were first introduced among the Upper Barama River Caribs with an election held at In Time in October 1967. From among four

and as others moved to the Air Strip, the prominent Councillor was a pronounced source of agricultural assistance. At one time or another, he helped all households that moved to the Air Strip. To those who requested it, he would give a wolisha (a large basket for carrying loads on the back) of manioc tubers or processed cassava cakes. Clearly, the Councillor was not providing a major portion of subsistence for anyone outside his household. Yet, he was a source of temporary relief during a time when farms were not yet productive and other sources of subsistence foods were scarce. Also, the Councillor made available manioc stalks necessary for planting new fields. Partly as a consequence of these activities, the prominent Councillor was elected as Captain during the second local election held at the Air Strip in October 1971.

As he is a long time resident of the Air Strip and had expanded his already established agricultural fields, the Councillor was able to make allegiances among the population in this manner. During the spring of 1971, he had 16.2 acres under cultivation compared to the incumbent Captain's farms, which amounted to 11.3 acres. This contrasts to 5.8 acres which was the average size of the cultivated fields of the remaining eighteen clearings at the Air Strip. However, this does not represent any sustained differential relationship to local resources. Agricultural fields are not exchanged. Rather, land holding is determined by the labor invested to develop it and remains a resource until it is reclaimed by the forest.[6]

Over time, the size and stability of Carib settlements have changed. Increasingly, the population has centralized around sources of external resources.